

VZCZCXRO7025  
PP RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHROV RUEHSR  
DE RUEHNC #0226/01 1000414  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 090414Z APR 08  
FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8700  
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE  
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 5177  
RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 4001  
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 1112  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 NICOSIA 000226

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EUR/SE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/08/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [TY](#) [CY](#)

SUBJECT: SOYER SUPPORTS SOLUTION PROCESS AT APRIL 4 MEETING  
WITH AMBASSADOR

Classified By: Classified by Ambassador Schlicher for reasons 1.4(a) and (d)

11. (C) Summary: "Prime Minister" and head of the "governing" Republican Turkish Party (CTP) Ferdi Sabit Soyer was upbeat, if a bit harried, during a forty-five minute meeting with Ambassador Schlicher on April 4. He voiced strong support for keeping the Ledra Street crossing open and blamed the security forces on both sides, as well as Republic of Cyprus Parliamentary Speaker (and then-acting President) Marios Karoyian, for the April 3 closing of Ledra. Soyer said that working groups and technical committees to be set up under the March 21 agreement must start work as soon as possible, but claimed that Greek Cypriot (G/C) demands limiting their terms of reference (TOR) to the 1977-79 high level agreements may delay the process. Soyer said that Turkish PM Erdogan was fully behind a Cyprus solution, but sought a quid pro quo--an easing of Turkish Cypriot (T/C) isolation before Turkey made a reciprocal gesture to G/Cs, such as opening a Turkish port to their ships -- to jump-start Turkey's EU accession process. Soyer assured the Ambassador that Chief of Turkish General Staff (TGS) Yasar Buyukkanit, whose recent visit to the island was seen as a needlessly provocative gesture in the south, was still on board with a solution. Lastly, Soyer promised to investigate "government" delays plaguing a prominent USAID project and look at ways of improving a deficient international property rights (IPR) draft "law" currently under consideration. End Summary.

Ledra: Police on both sides to blame

12. (C) Soyer said that the T/Cs remain fully committed to keeping Ledra open and agreed with the Ambassador that its teething pains must be dealt with at the technical level, with UNFICYP, before they escalate into political problems. He reported that, just 12 hours after its April 3 inauguration, he personally had taken control of the situation on the T/C side to prevent a crisis. After initially defending T/C police for having stopped placard-wielding Greek Cypriot protesters -- which G/C police cited as reason to close the crossing for three hours -- Soyer blamed the security forces on both sides for their tactics, adding that neither institution actually favored a solution. Soyer also alleged that acting RoC President Karoyian had intentionally aggravated the situation for political gain.

13. (C) Soyer pleaded that, should similar incidents unfold in the future, UNFICYP should immediately contact the civilian authorities of both sides and not depend on the local military/police authorities or others to pass the

message up in a timely manner. The Ambassador agreed and promised to pass this message on to the acting head of UNFICYP, Elizabeth Spehar.

Technical Committees and Working Groups: Differences with G/Cs over terms of reference

¶4. (C) Soyer agreed with the Ambassador's statement on the importance of starting the work of the technical committees and working groups as soon as possible, so that the leaders could begin comprehensive negotiations on schedule. He complained, however, that G/C negotiator George Iacovou had sought to include in the terms of reference the 1977-1979 High Level Agreements, which was unacceptable to the T/Cs. They want broad TORs, including references to bizonality and bicommunality, as well as to the entire "UN Body of Work." (Comment: Local diplomatic missions are rather puzzled by the T/Cs newfound problem with the inclusion of the High-Level Agreements in the TOR, since the Agreements actually put the bizonal, bicommunal formula into play on the UN track after Makarios and Denktash agreed to it. UNFICYP officials on April 7 claimed that Iacovou not only wanted the 1977-79 agreements noted specifically, but other UN negotiating efforts as well. Iacovou and Nami met on April 8; the last meeting before that was April 1. End Comment)

¶5. (C) The Ambassador told Soyer that the "labeling" of a basic engagement need not be controversial, and that a solution could be achieved if the parties focused on substance, not terminology, and negotiated in good faith. As proof, he pointed to the March 21 agreement between Talat and Christofias, which finessed a similar "labelling" issue regarding the July 8 agreement. The Embassy intended to support the process whenever and however possible, the Ambassador added; U.S. assistance funds already had been

NICOSIA 00000226 002.2 OF 003

committed to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to assist the work of the committees and working groups.

Kyprianou to blame for continued G/C cases against Financial Aid Tenders

¶6. (C) Soyer was angry that the Greek Cypriots had not only NOT withdrawn court cases blocking the implementation of Financial Aid Regulation tenders, but had filed two more in the period since Christofias's election. Such actions soured T/C public opinion against the EU. Soyer added that he did not believe that RoC Foreign Minister Markos Kyprianou really wanted to withdraw the cases. The Ambassador noted that Kyprianou had indeed told him that he was looking for a way to make the cases disappear; he promised to raise the matter at his next meeting with the FM. The Ambassador added that, as he saw it, the G/Cs should drop the cases since they could not sustain two wildly-divergent policies in Brussels -- trying to improve Cyprus-EU relations after the low point reached during the Papadopoulos era, while concurrently defying the will of the Commission with lawsuits.

Erdogan Fully Supports Solution and wants Quid Pro Quo on Cyprus

¶7. (C) Soyer said that Turkish PM Erdogan had voiced full support for a Cyprus solution during a meeting the two had had in Ankara in late March. Soyer added that Erdogan wants a quid pro quo on Cyprus: the international community should "do something" regarding Turkish Cypriot isolation so that Erdogan in turn could "give something" to the Greek Cypriots, likely the opening up Turkish airspace and ports to G/C traffic. This mutual action would jump-start Turkey's EU accession process. Soyer added that Turkish Deputy PM Cemil Cicek had seconded Erdogan's support--and desire to move on the EU front--during a phone call to congratulate him on Ledra Street.

¶8. (C) Soyer dodged the Ambassador's question regarding fallout in Cyprus from the AKP closure case; rather, he listed a number of reasons why Erdogan had stumbled (incursion into Northern Iraq/alliance with MHP over headscarves) and what he could do to get out of the present predicament (more democratic reforms). (Note: Many T/Cs believe that the solution process will grind to a halt if Erdogan is removed. End Note)

Buyukkanit Still on board

¶9. (C) Soyer claimed that TGS Chief Buyukkanit still supported a solution on Cyprus along the lines of a bi-zonal, bi-communal federation based on political equality--the same deal Buyukkanit reportedly blessed when he met "TRNC President" Mehmet Ali Talat's in Ankara in January. He attempted to soft-pedal statements that Buyukkanit had made during his March visit to the "TRNC" that Turkish troops would not immediately leave after a solution, arguing that even Christofias had admitted that a small number of Turkish troops would remain after a solution. (Note: Most CTP insiders see the Buyukkanit visit as generally positive when compared with those of former TGS chiefs. They blame the general's more dissonant tone near the end of the visit on Rauf Denktash's deleterious influence.)

Soyer promises to look into IPR "law" and USAID project

¶10. (C) The Ambassador urged Soyer to pass an intellectual property "law" that was in line with best practices and international standards and advised him to utilize available EU technical assistance to this end. The Ambassador pointed out that a present draft "IPR law" was woefully inadequate and would send the wrong signal to the world, i.e., that Turkish Cypriot authorities tolerate intellectual piracy. He also promised that the Embassy would continue to work with the T/C business community and Chamber of Commerce to fight counterfeit goods. Soyer pledged to investigate the IPR draft and provide us an update. (Note: Departing the meeting, Soyer's assistant confided that the draft was indeed bad.)

¶11. (C) The Ambassador also asked Soyer to investigate why certain "state" agencies had not provided a USAID implementer with information to commence the next phase of the Geographical Information System, a computerized project on land use planning and management. Without this information, the next stage of GIS, a project the T/Cs had pushed for,

NICOSIA 00000226 003 OF 003

cannot go forward. Again, Soyer promised to look into the matter.

¶12. (C) The April 3 temporary closing of Ledra--and Soyer's displeasure with the actions of the Turkish Forces-controlled T/C police--underscore the complicated position that Soyer, Talat, and the other pro-solution Turkish Cypriots find themselves. Turkish Cypriots often point out that they must manage not only the Greek Cypriots, but also a hydra-headed Turkey with common and opposing interests. The Turkish military is one very important element of that relationship, and while Soyer might have spun the Buyukkanit visit a bit, we agree with him that overall it did not go badly, and actually could have been much worse given the past relations between Talat and the Turkish military. Soyer's anxiety to get the technical committees and working groups started and move to negotiations as soon as possible is not surprising, given his "government's" shrinking popularity and its raison d'tre -- delivering a Cyprus solution. To move seriously toward this end, however, the T/Cs and G/Cs will have to come to agreement very soon on a mutually-agreed way publicly to discuss the basis of their re-engagement. End Comment  
SCHLICHER